

Democrats and Republicans must come together to pass a robust economic recovery package that includes tax relief to middle class families so we can begin to relieve the pressure that they feel every time they pay a bill.

Madam Speaker, the American people are looking to us for help and for help to jump start this economy. Let's go to work.

THE NEED FOR BIPARTISANSHIP IN THIS ECONOMIC CRISIS

(Mr. ADLER of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ADLER of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, last year, our economy experienced the weakest employment growth since the Great Depression, causing more and more families across the country to feel financially strapped. The U.S. economy lost hundreds of thousands of jobs in the first eleven months of 2008, and we heard bad news this morning about December's reports. The employment rate last year reached the highest level since 1993, and it could get worse, and those who managed to keep their jobs are experiencing stagnant and falling wages.

Americans are concerned about their futures as debts continue to mount, as bills pile up and as parents worry that their children won't have the same opportunities they had. Small businesses are an integral part of getting this economy moving again. We must ensure that we take appropriate action to assist small businesses and to restore our economic engine of growth. Small businesses represent the backbone of this country and of America's unwavering entrepreneurial spirit.

Madam Speaker, we must address our economic challenges quickly, and we must work in a strong bipartisan fashion to relieve the financial strain Americans feel every day. We must work immediately to pass an economic recovery package.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 7, 2009.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 6, 2009, at 5:13 p.m.:

That the Senate agreed to S. Res. 2.
That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 1.
That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 2.
With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

PROVIDING FOR A JOINT SESSION TO COUNT ELECTORAL VOTES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following privileged Senate concurrent resolution:

S. CON. RES. 1

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the two Houses of Congress shall meet in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Thursday, the 8th day of January 2009, at 1 o'clock post meridian, pursuant to the requirements of the Constitution and laws relating to the election of President and Vice President of the United States, and the President of the Senate shall be their Presiding Officer; that two tellers shall be previously appointed by the President of the Senate on the part of the Senate and two by the Speaker on the part of the House of Representatives, to whom shall be handed, as they are opened by the President of the Senate, all the certificates and papers purporting to be certificates of the electoral votes, which certificates and papers shall be opened, presented, and acted upon in the alphabetical order of the States, beginning with the letter 'A'; and said tellers, having then read the same in the presence and hearing of the two Houses, shall make a list of the votes as they shall appear from the said certificates; and the votes having been ascertained and counted in the manner and according to the rules by law provided, the result of the same shall be delivered to the President of the Senate, who shall thereupon announce the state of the vote, which announcement shall be deemed a sufficient declaration of the persons, if any, elected President and Vice President of the United States, and, together with a list of the votes, be entered on the Journals of the two Houses.

The Senate concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONTINUATION OF JOINT COMMITTEE TO MAKE INAUGURATION ARRANGEMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following privileged Senate concurrent resolution:

S. CON. RES. 2

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That effective from January 6, 2009, the joint committee created by Senate Concurrent Resolution 67 (110th Congress), to make the necessary arrangements for the inauguration, is hereby continued with the same power and authority provided for in that resolution.

SEC. 2. Effective from January 6, 2009, the provisions of Senate Concurrent Resolution 68 (110th Congress), to authorize the rotunda of the United States Capitol to be used in connection with the proceedings and ceremonies for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect of the United States, are continued with the same power and authority provided for in that resolution.

The Senate concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REAPPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS OF JOINT COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 2,

111th Congress, and the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair announces the Speaker's reappointment of the following Members of the House to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies:

Ms. PELOSI, California
Mr. HOYER, Maryland
Mr. BOEHNER, Ohio

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

PRESIDENTIAL RECORDS ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2009

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 35) to amend chapter 22 of title 44, United States Code, popularly known as the Presidential Records Act, to establish procedures for the consideration of claims of constitutionally based privilege against disclosure of Presidential records.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 35

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Presidential Records Act Amendments of 2009".

SEC. 2. PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS OF CONSTITUTIONALLY BASED PRIVILEGE AGAINST DISCLOSURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 22 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 2208. Claims of constitutionally based privilege against disclosure

“(a)(1) When the Archivist determines under this chapter to make available to the public any Presidential record that has not previously been made available to the public, the Archivist shall—

“(A) promptly provide notice of such determination to—

“(i) the former President during whose term of office the record was created; and

“(ii) the incumbent President; and

“(B) make the notice available to the public.

“(2) The notice under paragraph (1)—

“(A) shall be in writing; and

“(B) shall include such information as may be prescribed in regulations issued by the Archivist.

“(3)(A) Upon the expiration of the 20-day period (excepting Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) beginning on the date the Archivist provides notice under paragraph (1)(A), the Archivist shall make available to the public the record covered by the notice, except any record (or reasonably segregable part of a record) with respect to which the Archivist receives from a former President or the incumbent President notification of a claim of constitutionally based